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ABSTRACT

This report is a compilation of data on mass media consumption by Finns. It describes the results of a survey conducted using 1162 Finnish-speaking respondents, 12 years of age or older. It also compares these results with those collected from earlier studies. Radio is in 98% of Finnish homes and is listened to 1 hour and 45 minutes per day, a decline since 1967. Television is in 89% of Finnish homes and is viewed 1 hour and 46 minutes per day, an increase since 1967. At least one newspaper is read regularly by 99% of the population, one magazine regularly by 80%, one book is read every two months by 50%, and 22% visit the library in a two month period. Radio and television are the most important media for pensioners, housewives, and farmers, while newspapers, magazines, and books are preferred by white-collar employees, people in leadership positions, and students. Television has overtaken newspapers as the important news source in the last eight years. Other data presented includes news item preference as related to media type, significance, occupational group, and affiliation. (DAG)

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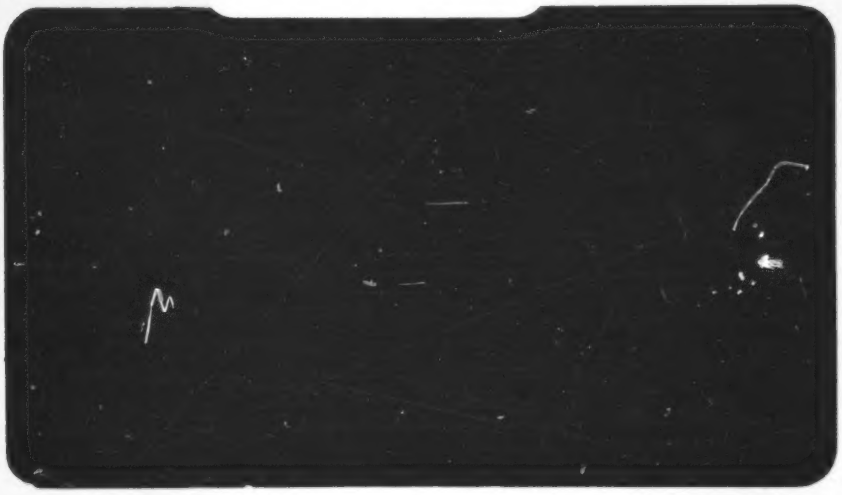

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THE FINNS AS USERS OF MASS MEDIA

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

This report is a compilation of the latest data on mass media consumption by Finns. It is primarily quantitative, in other words it concentrates on depicting the time spent following the mass media. It also contains a more thorough analysis of the development of the various media with regard to the news over an eight-year period.

The most recent data in this report are based on surveys and questionnaires completed in autumn 1973 together with Juha Kytömäki.[1] The studies covered from 1150-1300 Finnish-speaking respondents 12 years of age or over. A great deal of previously unreported material is also included (part II).

In order to obtain a time perspective, the data from last autumn are compared with studies made earlier, mainly those of the Section for Long Range Planning, The Finnish Broadcasting Company. In this way it is possible to estimate the development of the significance of different mass media in the course of the years.

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1) Haapasalo and Kytömäki, "Study on listening and viewing YLE programmes for the period from 25.10 to 4.11.1974", Long-range planning reports 4/74,
Haapasalo and Kytömäki, "The audience for radio and television during different periods", Long-range planning reports 5/1974 and
Haapasalo and Kytömäki, "Time spent listening to radio and watching television", Long-range planning reports 10/1974, Series B.

PART I: GENERAL CHARACTERIZATION OF MEDIA CONSUMPTION

1. RADIO LISTENING AND TELEVISION VIEWING

1.1 Radio

97%-98% of the Finnish population live in homes where there is a radio. Radio attracts 79% of the population daily. The yleisohjelma (Channel 1) attracts 2/3 of the population daily while the rinnakkaisohjelma (Channel 2) less than half the population. In the course of a week, 7% of the population does not listen to the radio. The audience attracted daily by radio in 1967 is the same as it is today (75% - the small discrepancy probably results from differences in measuring technique). Radio attracts 80-90% of the housewives, pensioners and farmers daily.

Finns spend 1 hour and 45 minutes listening to the radio every day.

For the entire population time spent listening to the radio has declined somewhat since 1967, when 2 hours and 16 minutes were spend daily. The spread of television explains most of this, for TV ownership increased from 75% to 89% in the same period. Time spent by TV owners listening to radio has stayed about the same.

TV owners listen to the radio 1 hour and 42 minutes every day, while those without TV spend over an hour more.

Housewives and pensioners listen most to the radio, more than 2 1/2 hours. Farmers also listen to the radio for more than two hours a day. White-collar workers and those in leadership positions - slightly more than an hour - and school children and students (1 hour 20 minutes) spent the least time listening to the radio.

Channel 1 is clearly the main channel, for it is listened to for 1 hour 15 minutes, while the corresponding figure for Channel 2 is only 35 minutes a day.

The occupational groups which account for the most listening time mainly follow Channel 1 and those who listen less follow Channel 2. The audience actually reached by radio listens 2 hours 18 minutes daily.
Half the radio listening is concentrated, half background listening (less concentrated).

1.2 Television

Only 11% of the Finnish population live in homes where there is no television. The daily television audience comprises 76% of the population, TV 1 over 70% and TV 2 from 30 to 40% of the population in TV 2's viewing range. Only 6 % of the population is not included in the television audience in the course of a week. In 1967 the daily TV audience comprised 63% of the population.

Finns watch television 1 hour and 46 minutes daily

Thus TV is followed as much as radio. For the entire population, TV viewing time has risen slightly since 1967 (9 minutes). The increase in TV ownership explains it, for viewing time for television owners has remained constant on the whole. TV owners spend nearly two hours every day watching television, while those without sets of their own, only 24 minutes.

The most enthusiastic radio listeners, housewives and pensioners, are also the most enthusiastic TV viewers (more than 2 hours daily). Those who watch TV the least are the same that listen the least to radio: people in leadership positions and school children and students (1 hour 30 minutes) daily.

TV 1 is clearly the most important channel, for TV 2 accounts for a good 1/5 of the viewing time and TV 1 the rest. TV viewing is only 3 minutes longer within the TV 2 viewing range than outside it. Thus the second channel does not increase the amount of viewing.

3/4 of the television viewing is concentrated and a quarter is less intense.

1.3 Radio and television

Only 1% of the Finnish population live in homes where there is neither radio nor television. Only 5% of the population is left outside the range of both electronic mass media daily and in the course of a week only a very few. Finns spend one-fourth of their waking hours (3 hours and 35 minutes) watching television or listening to radio and as much as five hours on Saturdays.

Mothers spend more than five hours and pensioners perhaps 20 minutes less. Farmers spend 4 hours, industrial workers and those in service industries 3 1/2, school children and students less than 3 hours and people in leadership positions 2 1/2 hours.

TV owners follow electronic mass media one half hour more than those without television.

Swedes watch and listen to radio and television as much as Finns, for they listen to radio 1 hour 45 minutes daily and watch television for 1 hour and 40 minutes (Schulman 1972, and Wachtmeister, 1972).

2. GRAPHIC MEDIA

In order to complete the picture, we have included a brief account of the results for newspaper, magazine and book reading. A more detailed analysis appears below.

2.1 Newspapers

99% of the population read at least one newspaper regularly. One-third reads one, less than half two, one-fifth three and 5% several. On average, 45 minutes is spent reading newspapers. White collar workers, those in leadership positions and pensioners spend the most time reading newspapers. School children, students and people in the service occupations spend the least time reading newspapers.

2.2 Magazines and periodicals

80% of the population regularly read at least one magazine or periodical. One quarter reads a single publication regularly, another quarter reads two.

A larger proportion of white-collar employees and people in leadership positions read three or more magazines or periodicals (42%).

2.3 Books and visits to the library

Only a scant half of the population had read even one book in the course of two months. One-sixth had read one book, one-tenth two books and one-fifth three or more books. The most books were read by white-collar employees, people in leadership positions and school children and students; farmers read the least books.

Three-fourths of the books read were for entertainment.

A scant quarter (22%) visited a library in the two-month period. School children and students clearly visited libraries more than the other groups: those in leadership positions were a close second.

Farmers and pensioners made the fewest trips to the library.

3. SUMMARY OF MASS MEDIA USE

Measured quantitatively, radio and television are clearly the most important media, for the average citizen spends 3 1/2 hours watching or listening daily; 40 minutes a day is spent reading newspapers.

Radio and television are important media for pensioners, housewives and farmers, while white-collar employees and people in leadership positions, school children and students spend more time following graphic media. Industrial workers and people in service occupations are situated between these extremes with respect to the amount of mass communication used.

These findings agree with those made in studies carried out in Finland in the 1960s, according to which people in the middle strata of society made less use of the electronic media and more of books, newspapers and periodicals. (Byckling 1969, p. 187-188). In that study "middle strata" was defined to mean those in more prestigious professions, city dwellers, men

between the ages of 30 and 61, the better educated and those from the highest social stratum. Galtung's index of social position was used (Byckling 1969, pp. 182-184).

4. EVALUATIONS OF VARIOUS NEWS MEDIA

One of the most interesting results of the final section of the report may be the fact that since the mid-sixties TV has succeeded in overtaking newspapers as the most important source of news. Eight years ago 40% considered newspapers the most important, 34% TV and 23% radio. The corresponding figures for 1973 and TV 47%, newspapers 25% and radio 25%. Despite differences in methods of measurement, the result is valid; the changes in the evaluations of new media are rather reliable.

It is apparent that TV's role has changed somewhat over the years. Whereas TV in the mid-sixties was still a rather new medium for many - a medium that had considerable appeal as an entertainment and played a certain role in providing public information, it is now a significant news medium. Of course, it is partly due to the fact that TV began lengthy evening news broadcasts in the mid-sixties. Preparations were more thorough than previously. Thus the 9.00 p.m. TV news is one of the most popular of the regular TV programmes, as the average audience exceeds 40% (see chapter 4, part II, for a more detailed account.

PART II: SURVEY FINDINGS: MASS MEDIA AUDIENCES AND EVALUATIONS OF NEWS MEDIA

1. INTRODUCTION

The latter part of this report provides a more exact account of the problems involved in mass information consumption which were presented in early winter 1973 in conjunction with the survey part of the audience study. The surveys were made betwen 2nd and 23rd October, 1973.

A more exact account of the study sample and the methods used in compiling the material appear in Long-range planning reports 4,5 and 10/1974, Series B.

The basic sample of respondents serving as the basis for this report comprised 1558 Finnish-speakers 12 years of age and over. 1,162 or 75% of the original sample were surveyed.

2. OWNERSHIP OF RADIO AND TELEVISION

2.1 Radio ownership

97.3% of those surveyed have a radio at home. Thus radio ownership seems to be constant, for according to a study made in 1972, 2.5% had no radios and 2-3% in 1970. Those who had only a non-VHF radio accounted for 8.3 %, and neither has this listener group changed in recent years (7.5 - 9.5 % since 1968 in the studies made).

Table 1. Radio ownership in the various occupational groups (%) (n=1162)

	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
no radio	4	2		2	3	3	2
VHF radio	88	92	99	90	86	81	92
non-VHF radio	8	7	1	8	12	15	6
Total	100	101	100	100	101	99	100

This study indicates that those without a radio are fairly evenly distributed among the various occupational groups.

Pensioners (15%) accounted for the largest share of non-VHF radios. White-collar employees and people in leadership positions had the best prospects for radio listening measured in terms of equipment ownership and operational properties (VHF listening opportunities).

2.2 Television ownership

89% of those surveyed had a television at home. There has been a continual moderate increase in television ownership, for a study made in spring 1972 showed that 83% had TV sets and home and the figure was 87% in spring 1973.

84% had black and white receivers, 4% colour sets and 1% both.

Table 2. Television ownership in different occupational groups (%) (n=1162)

	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
No TV	10	7	7	15	4	25	7
Black and white TV	86	86	81	83	88	70	88
Colour TV	3	6	9	1	5	5	3
Both	1	1	3	1	3		1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	101

Television ownership is much less unevenly distributed than radio ownership. Every fourth pensioner and every seventh farmer has no opportunity to watch TV at home. Colour television ownership is clearly most frequent for white-collar employees and those in leadership positions (12% colour television). The farming population had the lowest percentage of colour television ownership.

2.3 Ownership of both radio and television

The following table depicts ownership of both radio and television.

Table 3. Ownership of both radio and television (%) (n=1162)

	no television	television	total
no radio	1	2	3
radio	10	87	97
total	11	89	100
			(n=1162)

The table shows that at least 1% of the population has neither television nor radio at home. In contrast, every tenth Finn has merely a radio at home. Two per cent owned only a television.

3. USE OF GRAPHIC MEDIA

3.1 Books

During the past month more than half those surveyed had not read a single book (56%). One-sixth (17%) had read one book, one tenth (9%) two books and 6% three books. Thus the diligent readers, those who read more than three books, accounted for 13%. One out of every 20 Finns had read 10 or more books.

Table 4. Books read during the last month in various occupational groups (%) (n=1162)

Books read	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
none	64	55	29	71	55	61	35
1	16	15	21	17	19	12	20
2	7	9	13	4	10	9	12
3	3	6	12	3	6	7	10
4	2	6	7	1	1	4	3
5 or more	8	9	18	5	9	7	20
total	100	100	100	101	100	100	100

White-collar workers, those in leadership positions, school children and students accounted for about one-third of the non-readers. Farmers, industrial workers and pensioners accounted for about two-thirds. School children and white-collar workers accounted for about one-fifth of those diligent readers who read at least five books a month.

What kind of reading did the various occupational groups do? Books for entertainment were the most common for the entire group of respondents, for almost two-thirds (62%) read entertaining literature exclusively. One tenth of all the books read were non-fiction. One-fifth lacked data on the matter.

Table 5. The type of books read in the various occupational groups (%) (n=books read, 512)

Books read	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
Exclusively entertaining	65	53	58	70	69	54	68
Mainly enter.	1	5	6			5	4
Half enter.		3	2	2		5	
Mainly non-fiction	2	1	2			2	1
All non-fiction	12	12	4	15	9	17	3
No data	20	26	27	13	23	17	23
total	100	100	99	100	101	100	99

Over half those in all occupation groups read entertaining books exclusively. Textbooks or course books were not included for school children and students, and this had an effect on the result.

More than one-fifth (22%) of the respondents visited a library or bookmobile during the month preceding the survey. One twentieth

made one visit and another twentieth two. 3% visited three times and 2% four. One out of twenty visited a library five times or more.

Table 6. Library visits by occupational groups during the two-month period (%) (n=1162)

Library visits	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
Not once	86	78	63	94	85	89	44
once	3	7	12	2	5	2	10
twice	3	5	12	2	5	5	11
three	3	2	3	1	1	3	10
four	1	3	3	0	1	1	5
five or more times	4	5	7	1	1	3	21
total	100	100	100	100	100	101	101

School children and students are clearly the most diligent in making visits to the library. More than half visited a library during the two-month period. More than one-fifth of this group made five or more visits.

White-collar workers and those in leadership positions were the second most diligent group. More than one-third visited a library. One-fifth of the people in service occupations visited a library, one seventh of the housewives and factory workers, one tenth of the pensioners and one-twentieth of the farmers.

3.2 Newspapers

99% of the respondents read at least one newspaper regularly. One-third (32%) read a single paper, 45% two, 18% three, 4% four, 1% five and 0.3% six.

Table 7. The number of newspapers read regularly by occupational group (%) (n=1162)

Newspapers	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
None	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
One	39	33	15	12	28	39	38
Two	43	42	50	45	56	44	44
Three	13	19	26	30	13	11	15
Four	3	4	7	10	0	3	2
5-6	0	1	1	3	1	2	
total	99	100	99	100	99	100	100

White-collar workers, people in leadership positions and farmers account for most of those who read more than one newspaper (over 85%). Nearly 40% of the industrial workers, pensioners, and school children have access to only a single newspaper daily.

One-sixth of the respondents (16%) spent less than 15 minutes a day reading newspapers. One-fourth read a newspaper for 16-30 minutes, one-third from 31 to 60 minutes, one-fifth from 1-2 hours and 3% over 2 hours. 2% did not read a newspaper daily. The average time spent reading newspapers was 44 minutes.

Table 8. Time spent daily reading newspapers in various occupational groups (%) (n=1162)

Average reading time, minutes	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
do not read daily	2	2	0	4	1	3	3
- 15	15	16	1	7	15	8	36
16-30	30	28	16	25	26	14	28
31-60	32	40	43	37	42	30	26
61-120	19	12	38	23	13	32	6
121-	3	1	1	4	3	13	1
Average reading time (minutes)	43	37	59	49	42	64	27

Although pensioners receive relatively few newspapers, they spend most time of any group reading them, time that other groups do not have. Nearly half the pensioners read a paper for more than an hour daily. Four out of ten of those in leadership positions do the same. School children and those in service occupations spend less time reading newspapers every day.

The average reading time for school children is less than half an hour, but an hour for people in leadership positions and for pensioners. Industrial workers, farmers and housewives spend 3/4 of an hour reading a newspaper.

The 1st partial report of the communications policy committee presents some figures on newspaper reading. They are based on studies made in the 1960s. They indicate that a newspaper is read for half an hour daily. A difference in measurement methods may explain the difference of over ten minutes. (Committee report 1973: 91 I, p.34)

According to the same report, 34% read a single newspaper regularly, 22% read two and 12% read several.

3.2.1 Party affiliation of the newspapers read

One-third of the respondents read non-partisan newspapers exclusively. Only one-fifth (19%) of the respondents read only non-socialist newspapers and one one-hundredth (1%) only left-wing newspapers. One-third read non-socialist and non-partisan newspapers and 5% left-wing and non-partisan. 3% read non-socialist and left-wing newspapers and 3% chose papers representing the entire political spectrum (non-partisan, left-wing and non-socialist newspapers).

Table 9. The party affiliations of newspapers read by occupational groups (%) (n=1162)

Party affiliation	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
Does not read	1	1			1	1	1
Non-socialist	18	16	7	15	22	21	26
Non-partisan	40	41	35	24	29	38	30
Non-socialist and non-partisan	20	34	46	60	35	28	33
Non-socialist and socialist	5	2			5	1	3
Non-partisan and socialist	7	2	3	1	4	7	6
Non-socialist, non-partisan and socialist	4	4	9	1	1	2	
Socialist	2	0			3	1	1
Non-partisan	71	81	93	86	69	75	69
Non-socialist	47	56	62	76	63	52	62
Socialist	18	8	12	2	13	11	10

When we approach the matter in the manner above, 77% read non-partisan newspapers and 60% read non-socialist papers. Only 11% read socialist newspapers.

Managers, farmers and people in service occupations are more enthusiastic readers of the non-partisan press. Farmers, managers, housewives and school children read non-socialist newspapers the most. Industrial workers read socialist newspapers the most (one-fifth). In other groups about one-tenth read socialist newspapers, with the exception of farmers, where only 2% read socialist papers.

According to the report of the communications policy committee, 98% of the non-socialists read "bourgeois" or non-partisan newspapers. The corresponding figure among the socialists is 76% (Committee report 1973: 91 I, pp. 34-36).

3.3 Magazines and periodicals

One-fifth of the respondents did not read a single magazine

or periodical regularly, i.e. every issue published. One-fourth read a single newspaper regularly and one-fourth read two. 15% read three magazines, 9% four, and 7% five or more.

Table 10. The number of magazines and journals read regularly in different occupational groups (%) (N=1162)

Number of	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
None	21	13	18	17	19	28	15
1	28	28	19	26	15	20	29
2	24	27	21	24	27	24	29
3	15	14	21	14	17	14	19
4	6	11	15	11	12	8	5
5 or more	5	7	7	8	10	6	4
total	99	100	101	100	100	100	101

Those who did not read a magazine regularly were distributed rather evenly among the various occupational groups. However, more than one-fourth of the pensioners belonged to this group, but only one-eighth of those in service occupations. Those in leadership positions accounted for the largest share of the readers of 2 or more periodicals (42%).

The findings are quite similar to those presented in the communications committee report: according to it about 60% of the population read at least two periodicals. The report indicates that mass circulation magazines and of these primarily women's magazines, are read the most. According to the report an average 2 hours is spent on reading periodicals. (Committee report 1973: 91 I, p. 37).

4. THE MOST IMPORTANT FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC NEWS ITEMS AND EVALUATIONS OF NEWS MEDIA

The study also charted the content of mass media consumption to some extent. Respondents were asked what they considered the most important foreign and domestic news items covered by the communications media during the previous two months.

4.1 The most important foreign news item

The surveys were made between 2-23.10.1973, in which case the preceding two months, depending on the respondent, fell between 2.8 and 23.10.1973.

Tuula Joki and Anneli Koivisto of the Television News archives went throug the current TV news sheets. On the basis of these sheets, the following events received the most coverage on TV.[1] The events in Chile, the coup and the death of Allende; the conflict between Israel and the Arab states (particularly the October War); the bombing in Cambodia (almost daily coverage in August and September); Skylab II flight in August and September; Watergate, which was followed throughout the period in question; the resignation of Agnew; Peron's election to the Argentine presidency; bank robbery in Sweden; the health of the Swedish King; Swedish elections (the bank robbery and the king's condition were followed almost daily, overshadowing the elections) and the Cod War between Iceland and Britain at the end of the period.

What news events did the respondents consider the most important?

31% of the respondents mentioned the coup in Chile, 38% the war in the Middle East, 1% Vietnam, 1% Watergate, 2% the EEC, 8% the death of the Swedish King, 3% wars in general and 4% some other event. 12% did not consider a single event important. The findings show that there is a strong, positive correlation

1) Even though different news media may stress the importance of various news items in different ways, a TV news broadcast during the period in question is used as a mean.

between the news supplied and evaluations of the news. News items that received a great deal of coverage were those that people considered the most important. Only Peron's election, the Cambodian bombings, and the Cod War were not mentioned as important events. The first of these may seem remote to the Finnish audience and therefore unimportant. Cambodia may have been partially confused with Vietnam and the furor over the Cod War began too late in the survey period to become an important news item.

In most other studies findings that revealed a strong correlation between the news supplied and evaluations of its importance were obtained. This phenomenon is called the mass medias' "agenda setting" function.

Table 11. The most important news item for the various occupational groups (%) (n=1162)

	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
Unable to say	10	11	1	11	13	19	15
Chile	36	28	26	28	37	25	31
Middle East	37	38	59	36	33	36	38
Vietnam	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
Watergate	1	1	3		1	1	
EEC	2	2	3	4	3	1	1
The Swedish king	4	10	1	11	8	9	8
Wars	3	3		2	3	4	1
Other	4	5	4	5	1	4	5
total	99	99	98	99	100	100	100

Pensioners accounted for the largest proportion of the uninformed (one-fifth). Chile had the greatest effect on industrial workers, housewives and school children. Those in leadership positions were most interested in the events in the Middle East - the prelude to the oil crisis which beset the western world so severely.

Farmers were somewhat more interested in the EEC question. In contrast to other groups neither industrial workers nor individuals in leadership positions ranked the death of the Swedish king among the most important news events. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (60%) felt that the news event they considered most important did not concern them personally. One-third (33%) felt that they were directly affected. 7% were unable to say.

Table 12. Personal significance of news items considered most important (%)

	did not concern	concerned	unable to say	total
Chile	55	34	9	99
Middle East	58	36	5	99
Vietnam	44	56		100
Watergate	73	27		100
EEC	44	44	12	100
Swedish king	85	9	6	100
Wars	63	27	10	100
Other	62	36	2	100

The death of the Swedish king had the least effect. Only 9% felt that this event concerned them personally. There was a small group interested in Vietnam. However, they were more aware of the course of events there, for over half felt that they were personally affected. This is understandable, because the communications media had already stopped covering the cease fire in Vietnam, despite the continual state of war. Only those who were especially dedicated to the cause of Vietnam considered it the most important news item. The EEC also concerned many personally - in their own estimation.

Only 4% of the respondents cited personal experience or previous information as the cause of personal concern.

8% of the respondents cited the effects of the events as the subject of the news item: 3% felt that it had an effect elsewhere in the world, 2% on Finland and the Finns, 2% on a particular

population group and 1% on the respondents themselves. The greatest number - over one-third (36%) - mentioned the effects of the EEC: 20% on Finland and the Finns, 8% on a particular population group, and 8% on the respondents themselves. 15% took a moral stand on the news item they considered most important. The largest group (24%) view the coup in Chile in moral terms: the figure was 44% for the events in Vietnam. No one viewed the EEC question in moral terms.

To what extent did the communications media deal with the news items considered most important? 9% felt that coverage was insufficient, 81% sufficient, 6% excessive and 4% were unable to say.

Those saddened by the death of the Swedish king were the most satisfied: 94% felt that the event was given sufficient coverage. Respondents were also rather satisfied with the coverage of events in the Middle East. Only 1% of this group felt the matter had been mulled over excessively by the media. Of those who considered the coup in Chile the most important, 11% felt that the communications media gave it too much coverage and 10% felt that it did not receive enough.

One-fourth of those who considered the Vietnam question the most important felt that it did not receive sufficient coverage.

Which communications medium provided the best foreign news coverage according to the respondents?

Table 13. Respondents' choice of the best coverage for the various news events.

	radio	TV	news-papers	periodi-cals	others	data lacking	total
Chile	26	56	15	1		3	101
Middle East	30	44	24	0	0	2	100
Vietnam	13	75	13				101
Watergate	27	27	45				99
EEC	12	52	32			4	100
Swedish king	19	56	16	8		1	100
Wars	40	44	17				101
Others	26	42	28	4			100
Average	27	50	21	1	0	1	100

TV was clearly considered the most important medium for foreign news. On average, 50% considered it the best medium. Radio was in second place (27%) and newspapers in third (21%). Other news media were not considered important. Periodicals were rated the most important solely by those who considered the death of the Swedish king the most important foreign event, admittedly only 8% of them. TV dropped from first place only among those who considered Watergate the most important. Nearly half of them considered newspapers the best news medium.

Table 14. The best communications medium according to the various occupational groups (%) (n=1162)

	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
Radio	23	17	21	34	24	34	14
TV	45	45	34	44	51	33	49
Newspapers	18	25	41	8	10	9	20
Periodicals	0	1	1	1	1	2	1
Other			1				
Unable to say	13	12	1	13	13	21	16

Nearly all the occupational groups considered TV the best news medium. White-collar workers and people in leadership positions, however, considered newspapers better than TV and pensioners narrowly favoured radio.

Industrial workers, farmers and housewives put radio in second place; people in service occupations and school children chose newspapers.

4.2 The most important domestic news item

The following were the most important domestic news events[1] covered by the TV news:

1) Tuula Joki and Anneli Koivisto of the news archives selected the material.

Negotiations between Finland and the EEC concerning a free trade agreement and the related protective legislation which yielded the most domestic news items; what was considered record inflation (and it certainly was here in Finland in comparison with other European countries); the dispute concerning the location of the Finnish oil company's (Neste's) third oil refinery; new state tax scales and the proposed tax reform in general; the Finnish State budget and budget deliberations in Parliament; a committee report (the so-called Sarkko committee); the removal of Raimo Ilaskivi, M.P. from the place of the chairman of the National Coalition Party's Parliamentary group and the death on 2.10.1973 of Paavo Nurmi, the legendary Finnish runner.

55% of the respondents considered the EEC question the most important domestic news item. 5% mentioned items concerning Parliament, the government, the political parties and party politics. Taxes, prices and inflation were mentioned by 2%, Paavo Nurmi's death by 4%, accidents by 1%, sport by 1%, other human interest by 2% and other news items by 3%. 27% were unable to say which domestic news item they considered most important. Thus there were twice as many uninformed in this category as there were for foreign news items. The EEC question clearly dominated.

The congruence between the news supply and the domestic news items is perhaps somewhat smaller than for the foreign news items. This is partially due to the fact that the EEC discussion was very much in the forefront at the time and clearly dominated the news supply. Consequently there was extremely little space for other news items. Domestic news topics may have received more coverage than foreign ones.

Table 15. The domestic news item considered the most important in the various occupational groups (%) (n=1162)

	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
Unable to say	23	30	9	20	27	32	41
EEC	63	53	76	58	53	45	43
Parties and Parliament	3	4	10	5	8	7	2
taxes, prices, inflation	2	4	1	3		5	
Paavo Nurmi	2	3	1	6	8	3	6
Accidents	1	0		1		1	
Sports	1	2	2	1	1		1
	5	5		13	12	8	10
Other human interest	1		1	5	3	4	3
Other	3	3		2	1	3	3
Total	99	99	98	101	101	100	101

School children accounted for most of the uninformed. Managers and industrial workers were the most interested in EEC questions. A larger proportion of the pensioners than of any other group considered items concerning taxes, prices and inflation the most important domestic news. Farmers, housewives, school children and pensioners were more interested in various human interest news items.

Nearly half (46%) of the respondents were of the opinion that the domestic news item they considered most important concerned them personally. Domestic events were termed of more concern than foreign ones.

41% did not feel that the most important domestic news item concerned them personally. 13% were unable to give an opinion.

Table 16. Personal significance of news item considered most important (%)

	does not concern	concerns	unable to say	total
EEC	36	48	15	99
Parliament, parties	65	29	5	99
Taxes, prices, inflation	14	86		100
Paavo Nurmi	69	26	5	100
Accidents	63	25	13	101
Sports	55	36	9	100
Other human interest	64	32	4	100
Other	52	39	10	101

Taxes, prices and inflation were clearly considered to be of the most personal concern. Nearly every respondent who cited these topics considered them of personal concern. The EEC concerned every second respondent.

How did the respondents evaluate the coverage provided by the mass media of the domestic news item they considered most important? Three-fourths (73%) found the coverage sufficient, 8% found it excessive and 15% considered it inadequate. 4% were unable to say.

Table 17 Mass media treatment of the domestic news item considered most important (%)

	too little	enough	too much	unable to say	total
EEC	13	74	9	3	99
Parliament, parties	13	64	16	7	100
Taxes, prices, inflation	50	50			100
Paavo Nurmi	14	86			100
Accidents		89		11	100
Sports	18	82			100
Other human interest	20	76		4	100
Other	29	8	3	10	100

The least satisfied were those interested in taxes, prices and inflation. Half of them considered coverage by the communications media insufficient. The most satisfied were those interested in human interest topics. Apparently they were not particularly avid seekers of information.

Which medium provides the best news coverage?

Table 18 The respondents' choice of the best medium for domestic news with respect to different news items (%)

	radio	TV	news-paper	periodi-icals	other	unable to say	total
EEC	21	47	27	0	0	5	100
Parliament, parties	29	36	33	2			100
Taxes, prices, inflation	11	32	54		4		101
Paavo Nurmi	36	36	24			5	101
Accidents	33	22	33			11	99
Sports		36	45			18	99
Other human interest	32	44	16	8			100
Other	19	39	35	3		3	99
Average	22	44	29	1	1	3	100

TV is clearly considered the most important medium for domestic news, too. Radio, the second most important channel for foreign news, is rated slightly lower than newspapers as a medium for domestic news. The other media do not serve as sources of domestic news items.

Thus the evaluation of the different news media has changed somewhat since the mid-sixties, for at that time newspapers were considered the most important news media. The more local the news item, the greater the use of newspapers.

At that time the respondents (1965) were asked which medium they use most often to obtain information on world events. 40% chose newspapers, 34% TV and 23% radio.

Even though the questions used in this 1965 study were somewhat different from those in the present study, we can conclude that the evaluation of TV as a news medium has improved in eight years at the expense of newspapers to become the most important news media according to the respondents' evaluations.

It is apparent that TV's role has changed somewhat over the years. In the mid-sixties TV was a rather new medium for many. It appealed to the public as a source of entertainment and served to some extent as a general information medium. TV has since won a firm foothold as a news medium, at least in the respondents' evaluations (see Pietilä 1969). At least part of this is due to the long evening news broadcast begun after the mid-sixties. Preparations for this broadcast have been more thorough than previously. Thus the 9.00 p.m. news has become one of the most popular regular programmes: average viewing audience has increased over 40%. These results concerning mass media in Finland received indisputable support in several foreign studies. Thus in reviewing Robert T. Bower's book, Television and the Public, Tapio Varis points out that by 1960 television had clearly overtaken newspapers, periodicals and radio as an entertainment medium in the United States. A period in which TV consolidated its position in people's habits and expectations followed. In the seventies TV in the United States -- and according to my study in Finland, too - became a medium for current events without dropping its entertainment role. Thus in 1959 51-57% of the people surveyed in the United States stated that they received most of their news from newspapers. In 1971 respondents indicated that they received 60% of their news from TV and only 38% from newspapers. Varis also states that TV is considered the most important when people are surveyed in general about the source of their information. However, when more exact information is requested the result may be different (Varis 1974). This interpretation is quite natural because for instance the two news broadcasts provided by Finnish television cannot possibly convey news about as many events as radio in several broadcasts or newspapers with an even greater news capacity. This study also lends a certain amount of support to this interpretation.

Still, it must be emphasized that the results which indicate the importance of TV are news media evaluations. They do not necessarily tell us what medium is actually the most important for the public. In addition, we should also determine what the term "good news medium" really means. Does it mean that the medium is fast, factual or that it distributes information in an easily digestible form? Or is it unbiased or partisan?

Antero Okkonen severely criticizes TV's role in the journal Suomen Lehdistö (The Finnish Press), basing his analysis on American studies which show that among other things, 52% did not want to watch a single TV newscast topic (on average there were 19). The inquiries were made a few minutes after the end of the broadcast (Okkonen 1973, p.64). However, the article does not provide any information about the corresponding results for radio and newspapers. Alex Edelstein has also stated that when people are asked to give their opinion on important problems, they most frequently cite newspapers as the source of their important information. Television is in second place. (Edelstein, interview in Helsingin Sanomat, 29.9.1974). In this case the wording of the questions may to some extent determine the results.

For domestic news items TV is considered the most important medium, almost independently of the topic. Still, newspapers are the most important channel of information about taxes, prices and inflations. Sports fans also prefer newspapers. Radio was as successful as TV in its coverage of burial services for Paavo Nurmi.

37% considered TV the best medium for human interest news (the death of Paavo Nurmi, accidents, sports and other human interest), radio 30%, newspapers 25%, periodicals 2%, other media 1% and 5% were unable to say.

Table 19. The best medium for domestic news by occupational group (%) (n=1162)

	Industrial workers	Service occupations	Leadership positions	Farmers	Housewives	Pensioners	School children and students
Radio	18	11	7	23	28	19	7
Television	35	33	37	33	31	26	29
Newspapers	21	23	43	18	12	17	20
Periodicals			1	1		1	1
Other		1		1		1	1
Unable to say	26	33	12	25	29	36	43

There were clearly more people who were uninformed about domestic news in all occupational groups than there were about foreign news. It was difficult to select the most important items out of the mass of news available. 43% of the school children and students and 36% of the pensioners were uninformed.

With the exception of the white-collar employees and those in leadership positions, TV was the most important domestic news medium for all occupational groups. For people in leadership positions newspapers replace TV; this also applies to foreign news.

Radio is the second most important medium for farmers, housewives, pensioners and the newspaper is for industrial workers, those in service occupations and school children.

Newspapers are considered an important medium for both domestic and foreign news (29% and 21% respectively). Other studies lend support to this result. Thus Pertti Tiihonen stated that in 1965 21% considered the newspaper the most important medium for foreign news, 36% for domestic news and a good 90% for local news. (Tiihonen 1969, p. 63). The result depicts the actual divisions of labour between the media rather well: newspapers are able to put more effort into local problems, while TV lacks this opportunity. The revival of regional radio programming may change this division somewhat in favour of the electronic media.

4.3 Relationships between domestic and foreign news items

A comparison of news media considered best for domestic and foreign news appears below.

Table 20. The relationship between the domestic and foreign news media considered best (%)

Best foreign medium	Best domestic news medium: radio	TV	newspaper	periodical	other	unable to say
Radio	64	11	18	20	17	20
TV	25	72	30	20	83	32
Newspaper	5	12	45	60		12
Periodical	1	1	1			4
Unable to say	4	4	5			34
total	99	100	99	100	100	102

This table depicts loyalty to electronic mass media. Of those for whom radio was the most important domestic news medium, two-thirds felt that it was also the best medium for foreign news. The corresponding percentage for TV was 72%, but only 45% for newspapers. There were so few who chose periodicals as the most important media that the results were rather unreliable. The number of uninformed was high for both foreign and domestic news items.

What relationships were there between the foreign and domestic news items considered most important by the respondents?

Table 21. The relations between the most important foreign and domestic news items (%)

Foreign	Unable to say	EEC	Parliament	Taxes	Nurmi	Accidents	Sports	Other human interest	Other
	Domestic								
Unable to say	31	4	5	4	2	11	27	4	10
Chile	18	40	18	25	28	33	9	4	29
Middle-East	32	41	40	32	55	22	27	56	23
Vietnam	1	1	2	11					
Watergate	0	1	5						
EEC	2	1	7	18					
Swedish king	9	7	9	7	14		9	16	10
Wars	3	2	4			11		4	3
Other	3	3	9	4		22	27	16	19
Total	99	100	99	101	99	99	99	100	100

Interest in human interest topics left its mark on the selection of both domestic and foreign news: 14% of those who considered Nurmi's death important also considered the death of the Swedish king important. The same applied to 16% of those who considered other human interest items important. Those interested in domestic EEC news were the most interested in foreign events in Chile and the Middle East, those interested in the Parliament and party news were most concerned about the Middle East; the same applies to those interested in taxes, prices and inflation. Of this group a substantial percentage (one-fifth) considered the EEC questions the most important foreign news items. The events in Chile did not interest sports fans or those attracted by other human interest stories.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

A breakdown appears below

Respondents' occupations (n=1162)	%
Industrial workers	25
service and lower level white-collar	19
white-collar and leadership positions	6
farming population	14
housewives	7
pensioners	13
school children and students	15
total	99
Sex	
men	50
women	50
total	100
Age	
12-24	26
25-44	32
45-64	30
65 or older	8
data lacking	4
	100
Respondents' basic schooling	
part of elementary school or less	8
completed elementary school	67
part of junior secondary school	7
completed junior secondary school or part of senior secondary school	13
passed matriculation examinations	6
	100
Respondents' vocational and advanced training	
no vocational training	60
vocational course	12
vocational school or corresponding	19
institute level or corresponding	7
college or corresponding	3
	101